
**CALIFORNIA STUDENT AID COMMISSION
GRANT ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING**

10811 International Drive
Rancho Cordova, CA 95670

**MINUTES
February 21, 2008**

A teleconference meeting of the Grant Advisory Committee was held on Thursday, February 21, 2008.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Mary Lindsey, Chair, PI
Sharon Bowles, Vice Chair, HS
Kate Jeffery, UC
Dean Kulju, CSU/Alternate
Mary Robinson, CSU
Susan Gutierrez, CSU
Timothy Bonnel, CCC
Lisa Douglass, AICCU
Catherine Graham, AICCU
Frederick Holland, PI
Sally Pace, K-12
Noelia Gonzalez, CASFAA

STAFF:

Catalina Mistler, Chief, PASD
John Bays, Chief, Information Technology
Bryan Dickason, Manager, Cal Grant Operations
Gloria Falcon, Manager, PPD
Thea Pot-Van Atta, Manager, Student Support
Services
Yvette Johnson, Manager, School Support Services
Renee Alexander, PASD
Karen Henderson, Research & Policy Analysis
Lori Nezhura, PPD
Mona Stolz, PPD
Kristen Trimarche, PPD
Tae Kang, Cal Grant Operations

AICCU (Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities)
CASFAA (California Associate of Student Financial Aid Administrators)
CCC (California Community College)
CSU (California State University)
HS (High School)
K-12 (Kindergarten – 12th grade)
PASD (Program Administration and Services Division)
PI (Proprietary Institution)
PPD (Program Policy and Development Branch)
UC (University of California)

1 Roll Call was taken but a quorum was not recognized.

2 Chairperson Lindsey began the meeting with an overview of the purpose of the
3 teleconference meeting, which consisted of identifying the workgroups and determining what the
4 leaders anticipate will be the content of the workgroups in addition to prioritizing the order of the
5 workgroups.

6 Chairperson Lindsey explained that workgroup leaders held a teleconference with CSAC
7 staff prior to this meeting to establish the amount of staff time and research necessary to
8 support the workgroups since resources may not be widely available due to budget constraints.

9 **TAB 1.a – CAL GRANT COMPETITIVE AWARD SELECTION CRITERIA**

10 Committee discussion began with the topic of the current Cal Grant Competitive Award
11 Selection Criteria, with Catherine Graham as the workgroup leader. Member Graham indicated
12 two areas of focus: ensuring that new members of GAC understand what has happened
13 historically, especially given the fact that Mary Robinson has retired and is no longer a GAC
14 Member and part of the workgroup. Member Graham acknowledged that CSAC staff provided
15 her a brief history and inquired about the best way to share the information with GAC.

16 Member Graham continued by stating that the primary objective of the workgroup is to
17 understand the impact of changes to ISIR data, particularly related to zero EFCs, and its effect
18 on Competitive Cal Grant Program eligibility.

19 Chairperson Lindsey asked Member Graham to estimate the length of time she would
20 like to set aside to meet and accomplish the work of the workgroup. Member Graham
21 responded by indicating that she would like the workgroup to be scheduled over the summer
22 months between June and August and estimated the need for a total of two to three meetings of
23 one hour to 90 minutes in length.

24 Chairperson Lindsey asked Karen Henderson, CSAC Staff to respond to the level of
25 support needed for Member Graham's workgroup and she replied that the work might be a little
26 time consuming, but not too difficult.

1 CSAC Chief Catalina Mistler indicated that CSAC staff is committed to making every
2 effort to move forward on the workgroups, but referred to budget implications requiring CSAC to
3 develop a layoff plan, which may result in a reduction in CSAC staff and would impact the
4 resources available for GAC workgroup needs.

5 Member Graham asked about scheduling workgroup meetings without including CSAC
6 staff in an effort to review background information and avoid using CSAC staff resources;
7 however, Gloria Falcon, CSAC Staff clarified that if more than two workgroup members are
8 involved in a public meeting, then that meeting must be noticed and CSAC staff must be
9 present.

10 **TAB 1.b – CAL GRANT DATA ANALYSIS**

11 As workgroup leader, Member Jeffery specified two related questions to be addressed
12 and a third, unrelated item. The two related issues are associated with SEARS and Member
13 Jeffery proposed that a review of the SEARS survey is necessary to determine if the data
14 derived from the survey is meeting the needs of the Commission and the segments.

15 The first issue of the workgroup would be to look at the current use of SEARS data by
16 both CSAC staff and campuses and document how it is being used to determine if the data
17 actually should be used and/or what needs are not being met by using this data.

18 SEARS data is used by CSAC and some campuses to develop student expense
19 budgets and this workgroup can determine if SEARS is an appropriate source of information or
20 if there are alternatives, in addition to reviewing who needs to be developing the expense
21 budget and whether or not both CSAC and campus budgets are necessary.

22 Also, the workgroup can discuss the methodology for administering SEARS to find out if
23 the response rates could be improved and the cost of administering the survey could be
24 reduced.

1 The third, unrelated issue of take rates, is a lower priority and could be addressed at a
2 later time, and review the number of unutilized Cal Grant awards and analyze why they are not
3 being used.

4 Chairperson Lindsey asked about the amount of time she believes would be required to
5 work on the first two issues, to which Member Jeffery responded that at least two, initial
6 meetings for a total of approximately eight hours would be necessary and possibly more
7 depending on the nature of the discussions. Chairperson Lindsey followed up by suggesting 12
8 hours of meetings to provide enough time to complete the workgroup objectives.

9 Chairperson Lindsey continued by inquiring about the type of research needed and
10 Member Jeffery specified a survey or compilation of the current uses of SEARS in addition to a
11 comparative of CSAC's expense budget with campus expense budgets. Discussion ensued
12 about the availability of CSAC staff resources and other options for obtaining student budget
13 information, which all segments agreed to look into for comparison purposes.

14 **TAB 1.c – CAL GRANT C AWARDS**

15 Chairperson Lindsey indicated that she and Member De La Garza are leading this
16 workgroup and specified two issues for review. The first issue is the additional questions added
17 to SEARS allowing students in private career colleges and community colleges to self-identify
18 that they are vocational/occupational students and if CSAC staff resources are available, using
19 the data to review the actual expenses reported by these students.

20 Secondly, the workgroup would review the program to determine if it best meets the
21 needs of vocational/occupational students. This would require both data and policy input from
22 CSAC staff.

23 Ms. Henderson inquired about the amount of meeting time required for the topics and
24 when the workgroup issues would be scheduled. Chairperson Lindsey indicated that about four
25 to six hours would be needed and the time frame would depend on how the topics ranked based
26 on priority.

1 **TAB 1.d – PAYMENT PERIODS FOR NON-TRADITIONAL BASED SCHOOLS**

2 Workgroup leader, Member Holland began by noting that a meeting was held at the
3 CASFAA conference in December with several members from different non-term based schools
4 to glean ideas and suggestions regarding how to make changes and make payments to non-
5 term based schools more equitable.

6 The meeting culminated in some final recommendations that Member Holland indicated
7 he will make available when appropriate. The main issue requiring CSAC staff time is related to
8 reviewing a change in statute to allow for changing the Cal Grant application deadline to reflect
9 a process similar to Pell Grant.

10 Member Holland continued by stating that the topic should not require a significant
11 amount of CSAC staff research time and requested the workgroup be scheduled after the March
12 GAC meetings.

13 Chairperson Lindsey suggested scheduling a minimum of two hours at the May meeting
14 to review the work already completed in addition to incorporating feedback from the community
15 college segment. Member Holland stated that in the interim he would work with CSAC staff to
16 disseminate the information from the previous meeting to GAC members.

17 **TAB 1.e – CAL GRANT ACCOUNT MAINTENANCE AND ANNUAL INTEREST**
18 **CALCULATION**

19 Lori Nezhura, CSAC Staff provided an update on the status of this project and provided
20 preliminary numbers from the surveys received thus far, which totaled 152 or about a 35 percent
21 return rate, and should provide statistically sound data. The following is a breakdown of the
22 percentages returned by segment:

- 23 ▪ 70% from University of California
- 24 ▪ 100% from California State University
- 25 ▪ Approximately 42% from Community Colleges

- 1 ▪ Approximately 27% from proprietary institutions
- 2 ▪ Approximately 26% from independent schools

3 A summary of the data will be prepared for the March GAC meeting.

4 **TAB 2 – AT-RISK INSTITUTION CRITERIA UPDATE**

5 Chairperson Lindsey stated that CSAC staff has worked on this issue and staff will bring
6 forward recommendations at the March GAC meeting. Ms. Falcon continued by indicating that
7 after the findings are reported, a workgroup may be convened if necessary.

8 Discussion ensued among members about prioritizing the workgroups; however, a
9 quorum was not present to vote on any motions.

10 There being no further business, the meeting of the Grant Advisory Committee
11 adjourned at 2:20 p.m.

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17 MARY LINDSEY
18 GRANT ADVISORY COMMITTEE CHAIR
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